



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI_24_0345

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 23/04/2024

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_24_0345

On 25/03/2024 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

[...] At present, I am conducting a scoping literature review to answer the question: 'What approaches have been employed by the police to improve MP investigations, while considering the existing views and attitudes of police personnel on these approaches?' This review is supervised by Dr. Susan Giles (Expert in missing persons), Dr. Sara Waring (Expert in disaster responses) and Professor Louise Almond (Expert in offender profiling) and attempts to provide a comprehensive overview about what actually 'works' for the police personnel to respond effectively to such incidents and finally locate and safeguard mispers in a timely fashion.

As such, I am looking to synthesise information relevant to the question mentioned above to provide a clear insight about the police strategies and tools when officers are called to investigate missing persons. The findings of my literature review will provide empirical evidence on the police approaches practically led to the enhancement of missing persons investigations coupled with the views of police officers on these approaches that echo critical points in terms of their practical efficacy and usefulness. This will open the pathway of further relevant research, which findings will be beneficial for both the police forces and the academic fields of psychology, sociology, criminology and public policy.

To this end, my supervisors and I would like to request any relevant information either the UK police forces or researchers maintain on non-peer-reviewed literature (grey). This might concern police authority studies, reports, evaluations or even conference papers of the following information:

- Police practices for effectively investigating missing person enquiries spanning from the initial stage (e.g. evaluation of risk assessment approach) to the point where a person is found (e.g. reports regarding the Police Prevention Interview)

- Police practices for the main searching activity during missing persons investigations (e.g. evaluating the effectiveness of various operational models such as dedicated missing persons teams, CID, CSE teams)
- Police approaches in terms of tools used to locate missing persons in a timely fashion (e.g. GPS systems, social media platforms).
- Police strategies utilised to effectively manage risk –e.g. guidance and operational directions provided to distribute response proportionate to the classification of risk (no apparent risk, low, medium, high).
- Police officers' experiences, views and perceptions of the usefulness and effectiveness of these strategies, tactics or tools.
- Cost effectiveness of police practices in missing persons investigations (e.g. evaluation of the cost vs the successful outcomes achieved by using GPS tracking software, DNA analysis, or social media platforms).

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 s1, I can confirm that Gloucestershire Constabulary may hold some relevant information.

Information may be held by Gloucestershire Constabulary, however this would not be held in a format that would allow extraction with the permitted time constraints. To provide a definitive response, all officers and staff would need to be canvassed to determine if they hold any relevant data. Even by narrowing down this request to the department most likely to potentially hold this information, we have estimated that this request would far exceed the permitted time constraints, therefore Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act is applicable. This section does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimated that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit of 18 hours, equating to £450.00

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Gloucestershire Constabulary, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states the fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

In relation to your request Section 12 applies.

Section 12(1)– Fee Regulations states:

Section 1(1) of the Act does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit. (As detailed in the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Fees Regulations of 2004)

The appropriate limit at the moment is £450 calculated at an hourly rate of £25 per hour for all staff time incurred in:

- Determining whether information is held
- Locating it
- Retrieving it
- Extracting the information to be disclosed from the other information.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for your request.

Unfortunately I am unable to provide any assistance under Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act as I am unable to suggest any way to refine your request to come within the cost constraints of Section 12 of the Act.

If you are not satisfied with this response or any actions taken in dealing with your request, you have the right to ask that we review your case under our internal procedure. Please note that a request for an internal review must be made within 20 working days of the response to your original request.

If you decide to request that such a review is undertaken and following this process you are still unsatisfied, you then have the right to direct your complaint to the Information Commissioner for consideration.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following means:

Website - <https://ico.org.uk/>

Call their helpline - 0303 123 1113

Email - casework@ico.org.uk

Post –

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer
Gloucestershire Constabulary